

A History

Around the Course and Down the Track with "Doc"

A Conversation with

David Nunez - Onate - NMTCCCA President 2004 - 2006

and

Kelly Osuna - Cobre - NMTCCCA President 2012 - 2014

"Personal Thoughts on Serving as President of the NMTCCCA"

Doc: Who or what influenced you to become active at the Executive Board level of the NMTCCCA? Who were your mentors?

David: The late Tom Burns out of Alamogordo/Rhode Island influenced me to become active in the Executive Board. He told me that I needed to do more than coach and give back to the sport by helping make decisions that were in the best interest of the sport.

My mentors were Larry Chavez, past President, Rio Rancho; the late Chris Jaramillo, Valley; Joe Bailey, Moriarty; Spencer Sielschott, Sandia; and Board member, Doc Helm, Alamogordo - All helped me learn the "ropes" and process of the NMTCCCA.

Kelly: Well, the first few years I would just come to the Clinic and get every bit of information possible from our clinicians. As time started to go by, I made such wonderful friends; and at one of the meetings, I was nominated to represent the SW region. Wow! what an "Eye Opener"! This is when I found out how much so many did behind the scenes.

I was in "awe" of Spencer Sielschott. What he has done for the NMTCCCA is tremendous! Doc Helm, David Nunez, Cheryl Clemmer, Gary Sanchez, Joe Giglia, and Fred Polich are also mentors that made me want to do more for the NMTCCCA.

Doc: What were your motivations to run for the President's position and did your family play a role in the decision?

David: I had the honor to be coached by two of New Mexico's track and cross country greats - Bob and Marilyn Sepulveda. Marilyn was the first ever President of the NMTCCCA, and Bob served as well, and I wanted to follow their lead. They were my driving force and motivation.

My wife Becky has always played a role in my coaching. We met in college, and my college coach would ask her to work track and cross country meets, and she has not stopped. She is my rock, and I love her dearly for her support for over twenty-five years. It is not easy being the wife of a coach. I appreciate her understanding in allowing me to do what I love and enjoy.

Kelly: If I can remember correctly, Bob Vandiver was President-elect and took a new position as an athletic director and would not be coaching. I was then voted in to finish off his term. Thank God, Doc Helm was so helpful and guided me through this. When I did take the position of President, I was very nervous; but I did have a vision of getting more of our young members active and participating on the Executive Board. I was "elated" when Laci Lockwood became our Secretary. Another woman! Then, Andrea Kexel took on the Marilyn Sepulveda! Thank you Jesus! And yes, I was hoping to get more women involved on the Board.

During this time, my family was going through a crisis; and well, they didn't have a role in my decision to run.

Doc: Discuss the necessary qualities needed to be President of the NMTCCCA.

David: The qualities needed to be a good President are multifacit. You have to be ethical and honest when making, suggesting and formulating policies and decisions that effect the sports, coaches, and kids. You need to be a delegator and utilize the Board members and organization's strengths. You have to be a good communicator. The ability to convey your vision and what needs to be done in order for it to happen. Some additional qualities are commitment, positive attitude, creativity, intuition, and lastly, be able to inspire and move people to action for the good of the sport.

Kelly: I believe knowledge of what the Association does and has accomplished is very important. Knowing all it entails to run the January Clinic and the Sepulveda Meet is essential. During my term, Gary Sanchez and Cheryl Clemmer stepped down from running the Sepulveda Meet which was stressful. I thank God for wonderful people like Andrea Kexel and Lennie Gurule who stepped up and took those roles. As I have said so many times, Spencer is "one in a million"; and what he does and has done for the Association is beyond words - he is a vital factor of our January Clinic. Buster Mabrey also came in and helped us so much for the Clinic. So, as President, remain "humble" because you may bring in some ideas; but you will learn so much from past Presidents.

Doc: What were your goals for the Association when you became President? What were the steps you followed to attain said goals?

David: My goals were to improve the sports for all involved.

I did my best to utilize the people on the Board and networked with the NMAA and NMHSCA to help with the process.

Kelly: As stated before, I was hoping to get more of our young members active and wanting to take part in leadership roles of the NMTCCCA. I thank God Spencer remained as Clinic Director during my term because when that man decides to step down, those are some "huge" shoes to fill. Not to mention, I believe it would be of great help that the person taking on that position live close to Albuquerque.

I approached some of the younger members and asked them to please consider running for positions on the Executive Board. Some said yes and some said no.

Doc: Which goals did you accomplish, what were the obstacles, and what would you have done differently?

David: The goals I accomplished were to create an organizational website, to establish an award on behalf of the Association to give to a person who promoted the sports of cross country and track in a positive manner, and lastly, increase membership and advocacy for the sports of track and cross country.

Under my Presidency with the help of the Board members, we were able to get a website discussion going as a key topic and move in a direction to start its beginnings. It is much improved today and very informative. In addition, we did begin giving an award to a person who had a positive impact on our sports or running.

The obstacles were finding someone with web design experience and know how, and getting the money for another award.

Kelly: Well, we have two women active on the Board; and this was one of my goals. Also, once again, thanks to Andrea for taking over the Sepulveda Meet. I was unable to find help for Spencer, and this still worries me because it would be beneficial for the person or persons taking over his position as Clinic Director to shadow the "master" for at least a year.

Differently? I honestly don't know, maybe be more vocal on the website.

Doc: Define what effective leadership means to you.

David: Effective leadership to me is defined as a person who fosters greater pride in the organization, a stronger spirit of cooperation and teamwork, and a feeling of ownership and personal responsibility.

Kelly: Effective leadership to me means one who models and facilitates collaboration and inspires people to do their best for a positive common goal.

Doc: What are your suggestions for the future Presidents of the NMTCCCA?

David: I would offer to a future President the advice to listen openly to others, encourage members to exchange ideas, and show appreciation for others' contributions.

Kelly: As I have stated before, you make sure to stay "humble"; and learn from the "masters," and get Spencer some help because when he steps down, those are some huge shoes to fill.

Doc: What do you hope will be your legacy from your time as President?

David: My hopes are that my legacy as past President is remembered by many as a President who made an honest effort to help members identify and solve problems that coaches and student athletes faced in the sports of track and cross country. In addition, a President who did his best to improve our sports for all involved.

Kelly: My legacy, well, I don't believe I have done anything big enough to say I leave a legacy. I do know that many have seen that I have had to step back from coaching. I do miss it, but my children needed me to be Mom, not coach; and with that being said, I say I was blessed to have had the opportunity to coach for twenty-four years, but it is now time to step down and take on a different role - My kids call it Moad ha ha - half Mom half Dad.

Doc, thank you so much for being such an inspiration, mentor, but most of all - friend. You are a blessing.

We thank Kelly and David for their thoughts and service to our sports of track and cross country in "The Land of Enchantment."

Dr. David "Doc" Helm
President-emeritus
Historian/South
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